The Right Tone

Annotate a model request, then write one for a new audience.

11-12.W.1.e "Establish and maintain a consistent style and tone appropriate for the purpose and audience."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two phrases that show respect for the school board. Circle one sentence that acknowledges a concern without abandoning the proposal.

A Trial for Later Library Hours

1 To the members of the school board: Please consider a six-week pilot that keeps the high school library open until 5:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. Students who share crowded homes or care for younger siblings may struggle to find a quiet place to work after the final bell. The library already offers desks, reliable internet access, and reference materials in one supervised location. Extending access for a single afternoon each week would not solve every barrier to studying, but it would give students a practical option when the school day ends.

2 Staff time and building costs deserve careful attention. Rather than committing to a permanent schedule now, the board could set a clear limit on the pilot's expenses and ask the principal to identify a staff member who is available to supervise. If staffing cannot be arranged within that limit, the school should postpone the pilot instead of shifting extra work onto employees without compensation. During the trial, students could sign in when they arrive. Those records would show how many students use the library, while a brief anonymous survey could ask whether the later hours helped them complete schoolwork.

3 At the end of six weeks, the board could review attendance, staff feedback, and actual costs before deciding whether to continue. A small pilot is preferable to an indefinite promise because it gives the community evidence, not guesses, about the value of extended hours. Families would know exactly when the space is available, and employees would know that the schedule has a fixed endpoint. I ask the board to consider this limited trial and publish its criteria for success in advance. That would make the final decision easier to explain, even if the pilot does not continue.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which phrase in the opening addresses the board respectfully? Explain how it suits the audience.

2. How does the writer keep a measured tone when describing what later library hours could accomplish? Quote the relevant words.

3. What wording in the second paragraph shows respect for employees as well as the board? Explain its effect.

4. Why does the final request ask the board to publish criteria for success instead of simply demanding permanent later hours?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write an 80 to 100 word request to your principal proposing a quiet lunch room for students who need a break from noise. Use a respectful, consistent tone, acknowledge one reasonable concern, and propose a practical way to address it.

ANSWER KEY

The Right Tone

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two phrases that show respect for the school board. Circle one sentence that acknowledges a concern without abandoning the proposal. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which phrase in the opening addresses the board respectfully? Explain how it suits the audience.	**"Please consider" makes a direct request while leaving the decision to the school board.**
2	How does the writer keep a measured tone when describing what later library hours could accomplish? Quote the relevant words.	**The writer says the change "would not solve every barrier to studying," avoiding an exaggerated claim.**
3	What wording in the second paragraph shows respect for employees as well as the board? Explain its effect.	**The proposal says to postpone the pilot rather than shift "extra work onto employees without compensation." This treats staffing as a legitimate concern.**
4	Why does the final request ask the board to publish criteria for success instead of simply demanding permanent later hours?	**The request supports a limited trial and a decision based on evidence, maintaining the passage's practical, respectful tone.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Dear Principal, I ask you to consider opening one quiet room during lunch twice a week. Some students would welcome a place to read or take a break from conversation before afternoon classes. Supervision and space are reasonable concerns, so I suggest trying the plan for four weeks in an available classroom with a staff member who agrees to oversee it. Students could sign in, and the room could have a clear limit on capacity. After the trial, you could review attendance and staff feedback before deciding whether the room should remain open.

Accept other accurate quotations and explanations that connect word choice to a respectful, measured tone. For the writing task, look for a consistent tone suited to a principal, a reasonable concern, and a workable response to it.